

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 142 731

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CE 011 674

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TITLE Travel Agent. Occupational Simulation Kit.
INSTITUTION San Juan Basin Area Vocational-Technical School,
Cortez, Colo.
SPONS AGENCY Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and
Occupational Education, Denver.; Office of Education
(DHEW), Washington, D.C.; Western State Coll. of
Colorado, Gunnison.
PUB DATE [76]
NOTE 57p.; For related documents see CE 011 670-672, CE
011 673-679, and CE 011 682-688
EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$3.50 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Exploration; Elementary Secondary Education;
Occupations; Programed Materials; Simulation;
*Tourism
IDENTIFIERS Colorado; *Travel Agents

ABSTRACT

This career exploration instructional booklet on the travel agent's occupation is one of several resulting from the rural southwestern Colorado CEPAC Project (Career Education Process of Attitude Change). Based on a job analysis and utilizing a programed instructional format, the following content is included: A brief description of what a travel agent does; information about the travel business and problems encountered by travelers in foreign countries; 24 questions asking for specific courses of action in planning a trip in a simulated life situation; and answers to the questions so students can check their understanding of the content. The names and addresses of resources that can be consulted for additional information are included. (EM)

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TRAVEL AGENT
Occupational Simulation Kit
Career Education -
Process of Attitude Change
San Juan Basin Area
Vocational - Technical School
Cortez Colorado

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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FOREWARD

This occupational simulation kit was prepared by Wayne Peterson, Principal/Teacher at Mancos Elementary School, Mancos, Colorado. The kit was the result of a job analysis and was developed based on the format by John D. Krumboltz as presented in the USCF Study Vocational Problem Solving Experiences for Stimulating Career Exploration and Interest.

The CEFAC Career education Project is a consortium in Southwestern Colorado administered through the San Juan Basin Area Vocational-Technical School including the school districts of: Dolores RE-4A, Dolores, Colorado; Mancos RE-6, Mancos, Colorado; Dolores County RE-1-J, Dove Creek, Colorado; San Juan County No. 1, Silverton, Colorado; Egnar No. 18, Egnar, Colorado; Montezuma-Cortez RE-1, Cortez, Colorado; Bayfield 10Jt-R, Bayfield, Colorado.

The reader should note that the simulation kit may not be adaptable to all situations. This material has been reproduced so that others may benefit from the endeavors of the author and the Career Education Project.

This publication was the result of cooperative efforts of ESEA Title III through the Colorado State Department of Education and Vocational Education Part D Exemplary through the Colorado State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education and Western State College.

Have you ever dreamed of taking that
"Once in a life-time" trip?

Of course, you have! Often in a
quiet moment, your thoughts drifted
away to the pyramids of Egypt,
the Canals of Venice, the wild
animals of Africa, the Taj Mahal
of India, the Acropolis of Athens
or the Buckingham Palace of London.

At one time this was just an im-
possible dream; however, today, al-
most anyone who is determined to
travel can make the dream a reality.
The persons who helps you fly away
to your land of dreams is the
travel agent.

Yes, the travel agent has the knowledge, skill, and attitude to provide you with the most enjoyable time possible. He is the one who makes it his business to arrange all those little things that you might forget. All you do is sit back and let him do it.

Soon you will receive carefully planned instructions, schedules, reservations, and suggestions. Now let us go back to the beginning and find out how our trusted friend became a travel agent.

Our friend developed several attitudes and personality traits as a youngster. He was very curious, friendly and loved to help people. Later, he became enthusiastic, accurate, persistent, and honest. He studied communication skills along with business operation and social studies.

In order to set up an agency, he spent considerable time studying all phases of the travel business. When the transportation companies accepted him and he met other requirements, he became a travel agent.

Our friend is a salesman. Therefore, his job is to satisfy his customers. The amount of money that he earns depends on satisfied customers.

The remainder of this kit will help you learn about the occupation of a travel agent. Place yourself in the shoes of your customers. Remember one basic consideration: all arrangements must be made before the customer leaves the United States for Europe.

In your kit you will find an answer sheet to use with the questions in this booklet. Write the letter of the best answer next to the number 1 on the sheet, then turn the page and check it with the correct answer. Continue to answer the questions in this manner.

Most travelers know very little about their abilities; even though they are certain that they do. They feel that they know their way of life very well. It is a great shock to find that they really don't know what they think they know.

Question 1

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace, a young married couple, come into your office to arrange a trip to Europe? What should you do first?

- a. Begin arranging the most expensive, the most deluxe tour you can.
- b. Begin arranging the least expensive, the least deluxe tour that you can.
- c. Interview the young couple to discover their interests, their habits, and their financial status.
- d. Decide the tour which you feel will best suit the young couple.

Answer (c) is correct. Many young travelers do not know what they really want. A skilled travel agent will quickly ask the questions that will help the young couple determine which conveniences they need and which inconveniences that they can handle.

People who live in the United States are sheltered a great deal. Those who wish to go adventuring can do it easily. Adventuring in Europe is far more difficult.

Question 2

During the interview you discover that Mrs. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are unsure of themselves; they just do not seem able to do things for themselves. Which plan below would you advise?

- a. Take an independent trip in which you do everything for yourselves when you want to do it.
- b. Take a tour in which everything is done for you. Get the most for your money but follow directions.
- c. Take a charter flight to Europe. Rent a car, travel where you want to go and have a local tour agent handle your affairs.
- d. Take an independent trip, however, let us supply you with a list of suggestions for each day.

Answer (b) is correct. Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are not able to do things for themselves. Unless they take a tour, they will spend most of their vacation trying to figure out what to do.

The world of business is not as carefully controlled in Europe as it is in the United States. Because of this, European business people are not as easily trusted.

Question 3

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace wish to stay with families in various cities of Europe. What will you suggest?

- a. Stop at a hotel in each city, get a list and visit each home before making your choice.
- b. Take this list that we found in a newspaper of each city. Let us reserve the home of your choice.
- c. Write to this family whose name was found in a European city newspaper and reserve your room.
- d. Let us reserve a room with each family listed on this sheet. Our list was compiled from an official government bureau.

Answer (d) is correct. Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are not able to do things for themselves. Only official government bureaus list families who will give an honest deal. Beware of unofficial listings.

Travel agents must give their customers a very complete account of the costs of all services.

Question 4

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace want to know exactly what they will receive for their money. What do you do now?

- a. Develop and present to them a very accurate description of all expenses, services and expectations. Accompany this with a complete travel itinerary.
- b. Tell them that they shouldn't worry; their tour guide will handle everything.
- c. Give them a brief outline of what their tour money will give them. Tell them details must be worked out during the tour.
- d. Tell them that the basic tour cost has been given to them. They should, however, carry extra cash for unexpected expenses.

Answer (a) is correct. This practice is very good business technique and protects both the travel agent and customer from law suits. The customer also knows exactly where he stands.

People who live in Mediterranean countries have developed a resistance to effects of dirty water and dirty food. Therefore, few attempts have been made to safeguard travelers.

Question 5

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace ask about cleanliness of food and water in Mediterranean countries. What advice do you give them?

- a. Carry haolzone tablets for water and antacid tablets for food.
- b. Buy only processed items such as bottled water and packaged foods.
- c. Health standards are high. Eat and drink anything.
- d. Buy only from street vendors.

Answer (b) is correct. Only processed food and water are clean in relationship to American standards.

Restaurants are operated differently in most countries of Europe. Menus, prices, unfamiliar money, unusual eating habits and local customs can contribute to unpleasant eating experiences.

Question 6

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace wish to eat their meals in restaurants of their choice. What do you say to them?

- a. It is desirable to eat at restaurants of your choice. Carry enough extra money to pay for meals which cost as much as meals in the United States.
- b. Eat only at the hotel where you stay.
- c. Here is a list of restaurants which we suggest. These restaurants will give you the best service.
- d. We will arrange meals for you. When you pay us, you avoid rising prices, arguments over bills and eat at good restaurants.

Answer (d) is correct. Pre-paid meals that are arranged prior to a trip will save tourists a lot of frustration. They also eliminate the amount of money tourists must carry.

It is easy to forget that many of us own foreign-made equipment. Because of this a tourist can easily be arrested for stealing. European police are not familiar with the buying habits of Americans.

Question 7

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace will carry with them a German-made camera and other European-made equipment. What comment will you make to them?

- a. Be certain to carry with you a certificate of ownership which is signed by a Notary Public in the United States.
- b. Make a list of all those items which you take to Europe from your home in the United States; carry it with you.
- c. Scratch your name into the metal of your equipment.
- d. Report all items which you brought with you to the local police.

Answer (a) is correct. A signed certificate of ownership is the only true proof of ownership in this list.

"Tourist traps" are common in Europe. These are easily accessible to tourists. Those caught up in the glamour of Europe are easy victims.

Question 8

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace wish to purchase many souvenirs. What should you tell them?

- a. Go to shops where most American tourists go. Shops with tourist tour buses parked in front give the best buys.
- b. Shop for the best bargains. Visit many shops until you find the best prices.
- c. All prices are the same. Do not waste time going from shop to shop.
- d. Hire local citizens to shop for you.

Answer (b) is correct. Local merchants often charge Americans very high prices at "Tourist shops."

Tour guides can be easily tempted to use dishonest methods. After all, they are separated from the home office by the Atlantic Ocean. Any complaints take time to reach the travel agent.

Question 9

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are concerned about the honesty of the tour guide. What arrangements should you make?

- a. Inform the Wallace's that they may request the replacement of a tour guide at any time.
- b. Make certain that you hire the best tour guide possible.
- c. Suggest that the Wallace's contact the American Consulate or Embassy about poor conduct on the part of the tour guide.
- d. Suggest that the Wallace's contact you directly from Europe if the tour guide does a poor job.

Answer (b) is the best. All other answers may give solutions to the problem, however, each takes too much time.

Several international banks offer a service of selling packets of money used in each country to a tourist before he leaves the United States. A money conversion booklet is enclosed in the packet. A small profit is made on the packet by the bank.

Question 10

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace ask advice about buying packets with a small amount of currency from each country on tour. This money will take care of the first day's expenses in each country. Which suggestions will you make?

- a. You will be very pleased with your packet of currency. This packet saves time and eliminates high rates of interest at Currency Exchange.
- b. The high rate of commission on these packets makes them too expensive.
- c. There isn't enough money in each packet to overcome inconveniences.
- d. Most of this money is old-issue, not acceptable by shops.

Answer (a) is correct. Currency packets have proved to be very practical and a great advantage.

Travel agents experience the greatest success when they deal directly with foreign ticket offices.

Question 11

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace wish to attend an opera at the Baths of Caracalla in Rome. How can you help them:

- a. Contact a travel agency in Rome and arrange to have them deliver the tickets to the Wallace's hotel.
- b. Assure the Wallace's that they will have no trouble buying tickets at the gate.
- c. Give the Wallace's the address of the ticket office in Rome so that they can choose their own seats.
- d. Purchase choice tickets and give them to the Wallace's before they leave.

Answer (d) is correct. This is the best method to make certain the Wallace's get their tickets.

Luggage is handled in Europe as it is in the United States. It is thrown, wedged, dropped and abused in other ways.

Question 12

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are concerned about the safety of their luggage. What suggestions will you give?

- a. Don't worry, all transportation companies handle luggage very carefully.
- b. Buy luggage insurance in addition to the insurance offered by the transportation companies.
- c. Buy luggage insurance if the insurance offered by the transportation agency if the ticket is not sufficient.
- d. Carry the luggage yourself to make certain the luggage will not be damaged.

Answer (c) is correct. Usually, the insurance offered by transportation companies will be adequate. If not, additional insurance will be needed.

Suitcase packing must be considered carefully. Every cubic inch has to be planned carefully. Clothing, personal items and equipment are all necessary, however, they are not needed in large quantity. Travel light, but include a little of everything.

Question 13

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace ask about packing their suitcases. What advice do they need?

- a. Pack drip-dry clothes, you need only a few. Carry an extra pair of shoes. Packtowelettes, large facial tissues, (for handkerchiefs) and toilet tissue. Limit the weight to transportation company regulations.
- b. Pack plenty of clothes so you will be prepared for emergencies. You can purchase most small item conveniences.
- c. Allow room for clothing, curios, and other items which you will purchase in Europe.
- d. Pack plenty of clothes, plenty of toiletries and plenty of various equipment.

Answer (a) is correct. Drip-dry clothing is light; it can be washed and dried in unheated European rooms. Towlettes, facial tissue, and toilet tissue are items that will be needed. European shoes are larger than American shoes; you may not find any that fit if your shoes need repair.

It is a good idea to carry more money than is planned. Careful budgeting is necessary. Consideration should be given to the safety of money.

Question 14

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are worried about the amount of money that they should carry. What should they learn?

- a. Carry extra money in cash; it is most easily exchanged. You may want to buy more than you planned.
- b. Carry extra money in the form of traveler's checks. Most tourists need more money and have to send telegrams home.
- c. Carry little extra money; you can always send a telegram to your bank at home.
- d. Take the tour; you will need only a little extra cash because all essentials are prepaid. We will suggest the amount of extra cash which should be carried in the form of traveler's checks.

Answer (d) is the best answer. You get more for your money. All your essentials are prepaid. The amount of extra cash can be more accurately determined with skilled assistance.

The low cost of joint passports betrays convenience. Joint passports turn out to be a nuisance as each want to go different places and need a passport.

Question 15

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace have been told that they should carry a joint passport. What should you advise?

- a. Joint passports cost less money. There are few times that you will not travel together.
- b. Joint passports are more quickly processed in foreign custom offices and help you hurry along.
- c. Separate passports cost more, however, they give you both a wonderful souvenir to keep until they must be returned.
- d. Separate passports cost more, however, each of you should carry your passport at all times. Besides, accidents can happen. While one is in the hospital the other is not free to travel.

Answer (d) is correct. Separate passports are certainly more convenient and a necessity.

Conditions of lodging vary greatly from one class hotel to another. Comfort is worth the added cost of a better class place of lodging.

Question 16

You feel that the Wallace's are very uncomfortable in accomadations that are less than spotless. What kind of accommodations will you reserve for them?

- a. Class A
- b. Class B
- c. Class C
- d. Class D

Answer (a) is correct. A good night's sleep does wonders.

The loss of a passport no longer creates costly delays. The simple practice of carrying it with you will eliminate an embarrassing problem. Be certain to copy the passport number.

Question 17

The Wallace's are concerned about the possibility of delays caused by the loss of their passport.

What should you tell them?

- a. If passports are lost, delays may last for months.
- b. Passports can be replaced only if you go the Consulate or Embassy in person.
- c. Your passport can be replaced quickly if you have a copy of the passport number.
- d. The lost passport must be recovered before a replacement can be obtained.

Answer (c) is correct. Long delays
are no longer necessary.

Official records may be required
at any moment. Records can also be
carried more safely if kept on person.

Question 18

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace must carry official records with them at all times. Which records will you advise them to carry?

- a. Passports, ownership certificates, transportation tickets.
- b. International immunization record.
- c. Passports and visas or tourist cards, international immunization record, transportation tickets, ownership certificates, and an extra key to suitcases.
- d. Passports and international immunization record.

Answer (c) is correct. A tourist never knows when he will need official records. Loss can be avoided by carrying on person.

The study of foreign currency is not difficult especially if you carry a money converter chart. We never buy anything in the United States without knowing the value of money; neither should we buy in Europe without a working knowledge of money.

Question 19

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace are not interested in learning about foreign currency. What is your advice?

- a. European merchants will not cheat American tourists. Tourist business is too important to them.
- b. There are honest Europeans and dishonest Europeans. You can save money by learning the value of foreign currency.
- c. It is most convenient to allow European merchants to select currency from your open hand.
- d. Request the tour guide to make purchases for you.

Answer (a) is correct. A tourist can lose money when he shows ignorance about currency values.

The usual European Ala Carte menu is strange to Americans. Local hidden charges also frustrate American travelers. It helps a great deal to understand the prices may be much greater than supposed.

Question 20

Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace have heard about problems with restaurant charges in some European countries. How do you handle this concern?

- a. Remember that most European menus are Ala Carte menus. You must add prices of all items ordered.
- b. Restaurant owners in Mediterranean countries usually have hidden charges such as cover charges, service charges, tips, and bread charges. If you enjoy the pre-paid meal service, you avoid hidden charges. If not, you may expect meals to cost twice that what you planned.
- c. Waiters in most European countries are very patient can carefully explain the charges so that you know exactly all charges.
1. Most restaurants in foreign countries employ an English speaking waiter who will aid you in making an appropriate menu selection.

Answer (b) is the best answer.

Many tourists have been surprised and have argued over hidden charges given to them in restaurants.

Recent changes in the value of the dollar have completely destroyed budgets of American tourists in Europe who traveled independently. Travelers with pre-paid packages were not affected.

Question 21

Recent changes in the value of the American Dollar concern the Wallace's.

What can you tell them?

- a. Prepaid, planned tours guarantee you that your dollar value will not change. Only your own optional purchases will concern you.
- b. Inflation will affect all of your charges. This is a charge that tourists must take.
- c. This will be of no concern of yours on tour. The travel agency will pay the difference in costs and charge you later.
- d. Tourists should carry twenty-five percent more money than they plan to use. This protects you against inflation.

Answer (a) is correct. Pre-planned tours do guarantee you that your accommodation charges will not change.

Frequently tour guides take advantage of the limited experience of American tourists and request unfair tips in Europe. It is wise to determine if tour guide tipping is in order before you leave the United States.

Question 22

Some tour guides encourage large tips while tourists are in Europe.

The Wallace's are very apprehensive about this fact. How do you reassure them?

- a. Tour guides work hard and deserve to make this request. This is your option.
- b. We suggest that you do carry enough money to include a ten percent tip for the tour guide.
- c. Tour guides are only paid through tips and commissions from European merchants.
- d. Our travel agency has included all necessary tips in your pre-paid tour.

Answer (d) is correct. Tourists must always know exactly which expenses that they should pay.

It is always a good idea to arrange for complete insurance coverage.

You may already have enough insurance; you may need more. Your insurance investment is wise.

Question 23

Friends of the Wallace's were hospitalized in Europe during their recent tour. The Wallace's wish to protect themselves against this added expense. How do you help them?

- a. Advise them to see their insurance agent.
- b. Suggest that they build a savings account for this purpose.
- c. Study their insurance coverage, work with their insurance agent, and add coverage if needed. Also consider automobile insurance and other insurance.
- d. Suggest that they obtain insurance in Europe for better service.

Answer (c) is correct. Tourists
deserve to enjoy adequate insurance
coverage.

You are a professional. Your financial
gain is important and necessary for
your families standard of living,
however, your customer's satisfaction
comes first.

Question 24

Now that you have completed all arrangements for Mr. and Mrs. Barry Wallace, you are satisfied. For which of the following reasons are you satisfied?

- a. You made as much money as you possibly could.
- b. The Wallace's will help spread the word about your agency and business will grow.
- c. You helped give the Wallace's the most convenient, enjoyable tour possible.
- d. All of the transportation lines, lodging companies, eating establishments, tour agencies, and other service organizations made money because of your work.

Answer (c) is correct. You are a professional person and your increased wealth is not nearly as important as the service that you give others.

Now that you have become acquainted with the travel agent's occupation, you will want to gain further information. The following sources will help you.

1. Ask the local travel agents in your area.
2. Read Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance.
3. Read U.S. Government The Institute of Research, Research No. 184
4. Write the Education and Training Department, American Society of Travel Agents, 360 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017

5. Write the National Association of Travel Organization, 900 17th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Project presented or reported herein was performed pursuant to a Grant from the U.S. Office of Education; Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

Cover Illustration by Deana Petro
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